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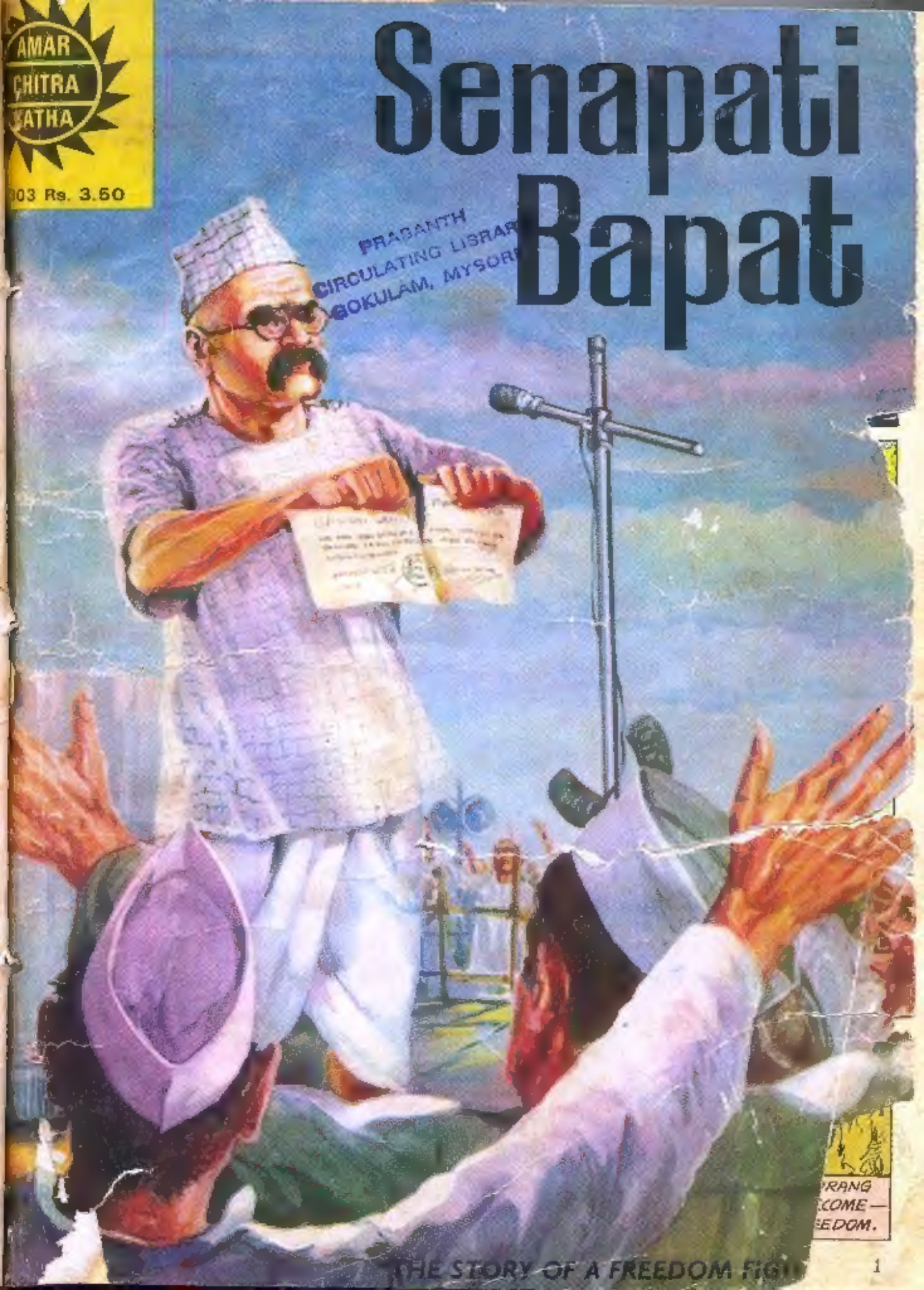

THE STORY OF A FREEDOM FIGH

Amar Chitra Katha
No. 303, February 1, 1984

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Senapati Bapat

Senapati Bapat or Tatya, as he affectionately called, was born November 12, 1880, at Parner in Ahmednagar district of Maharasht

He took the oath of poverty wh he was a college student a thenceforth gave himself up entir to the cause of the motherland.

Though he believed in violence a means to a noble end, he was n averse to peaceful methods but course only if they worked. This w Senapati's greatest attribute – catholicity of outlook and openness of mind. He had t courage to criticise even Gandhiji if thought him to be wrong, but the ne moment, he would fast with t Mahatma if he considered the cau was good. The cause, not the ma was what mattered to Senapati – high ideal he followed all through life.

We are grateful to Shri Vaman Bapat for spa his precious time to go through the text and works of this title and for offering valu suggestions.

– Edi

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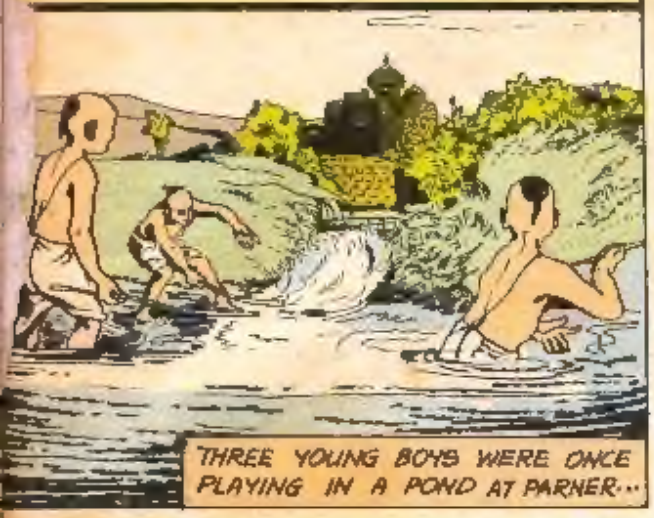
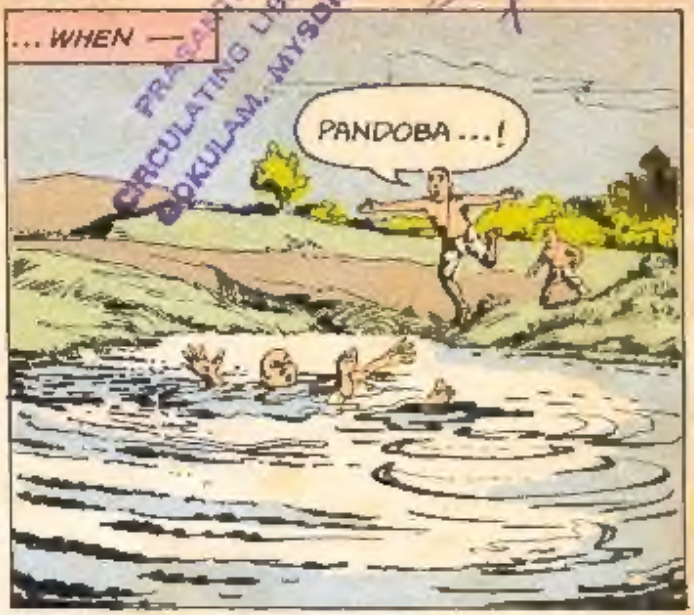
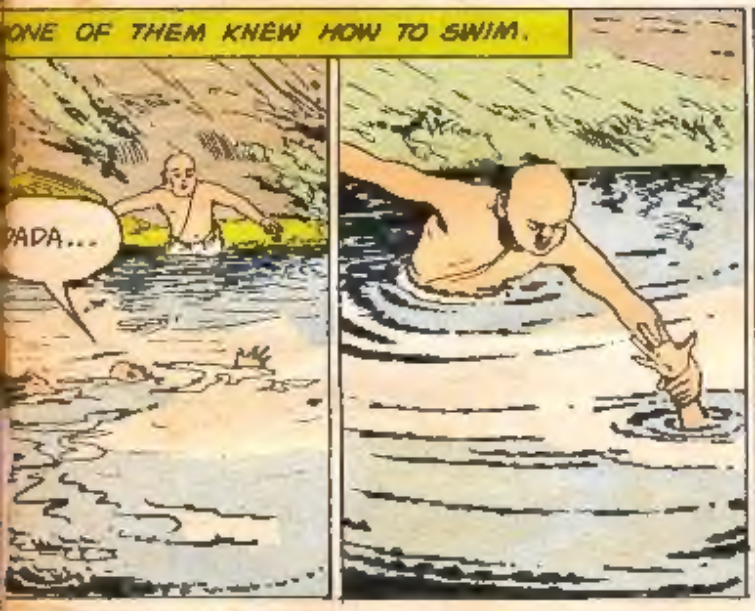
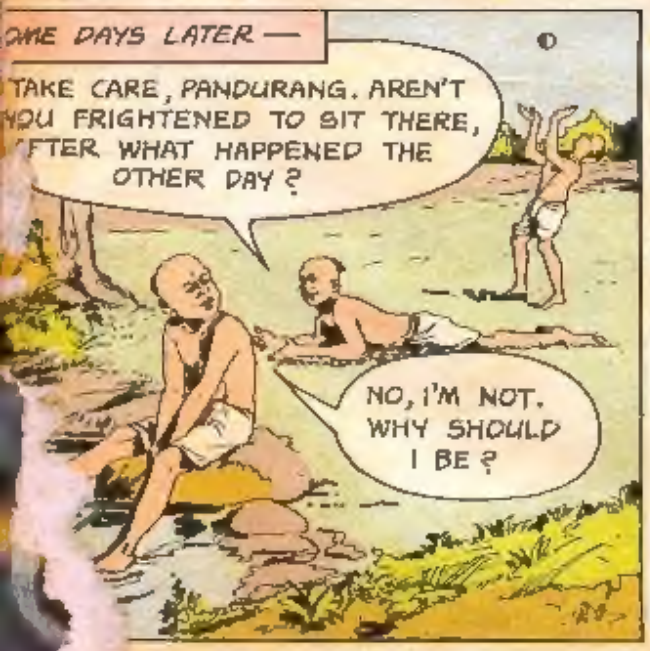
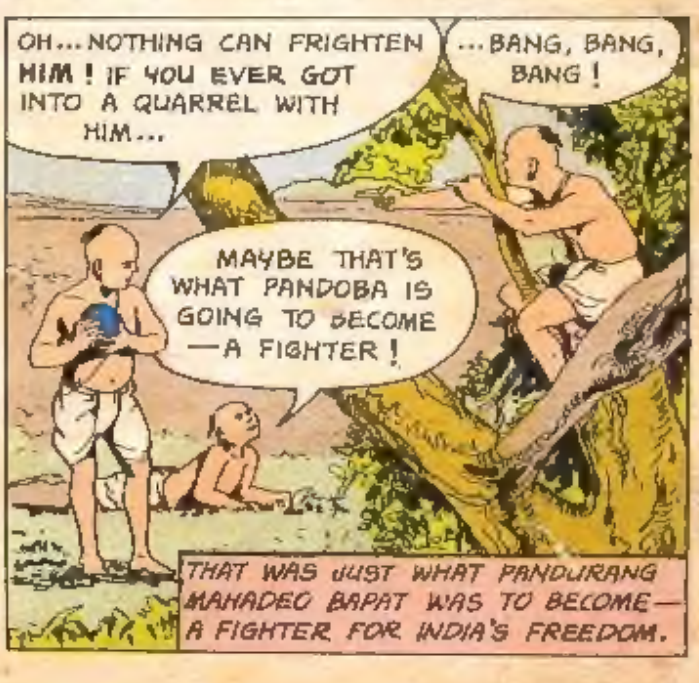
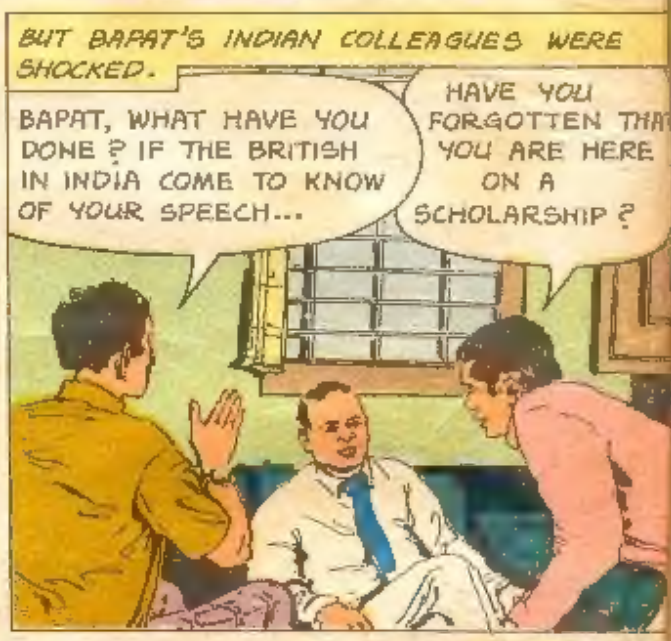


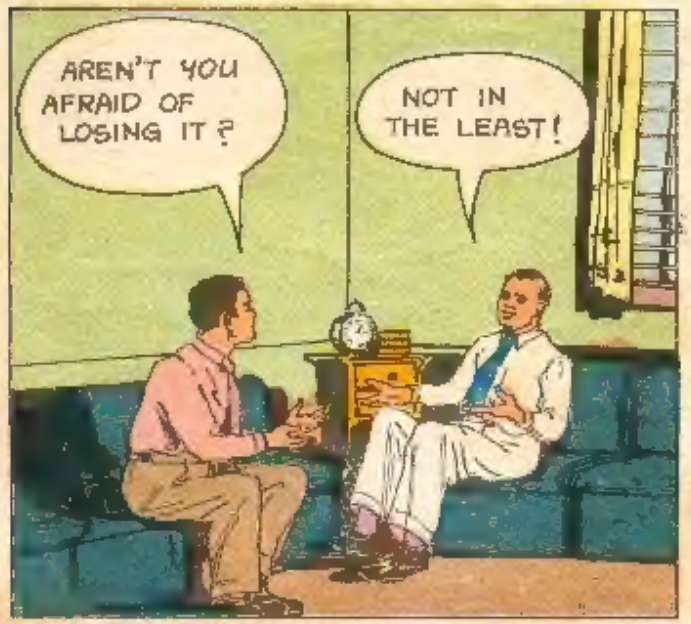












* LATER NAMED THE LABOUR PARTY

BAPAT BRINGS THE BOMB TO INDIA

SOON AT THE BOMBAY DOCKS —

PASSPORT, PLEASE...!

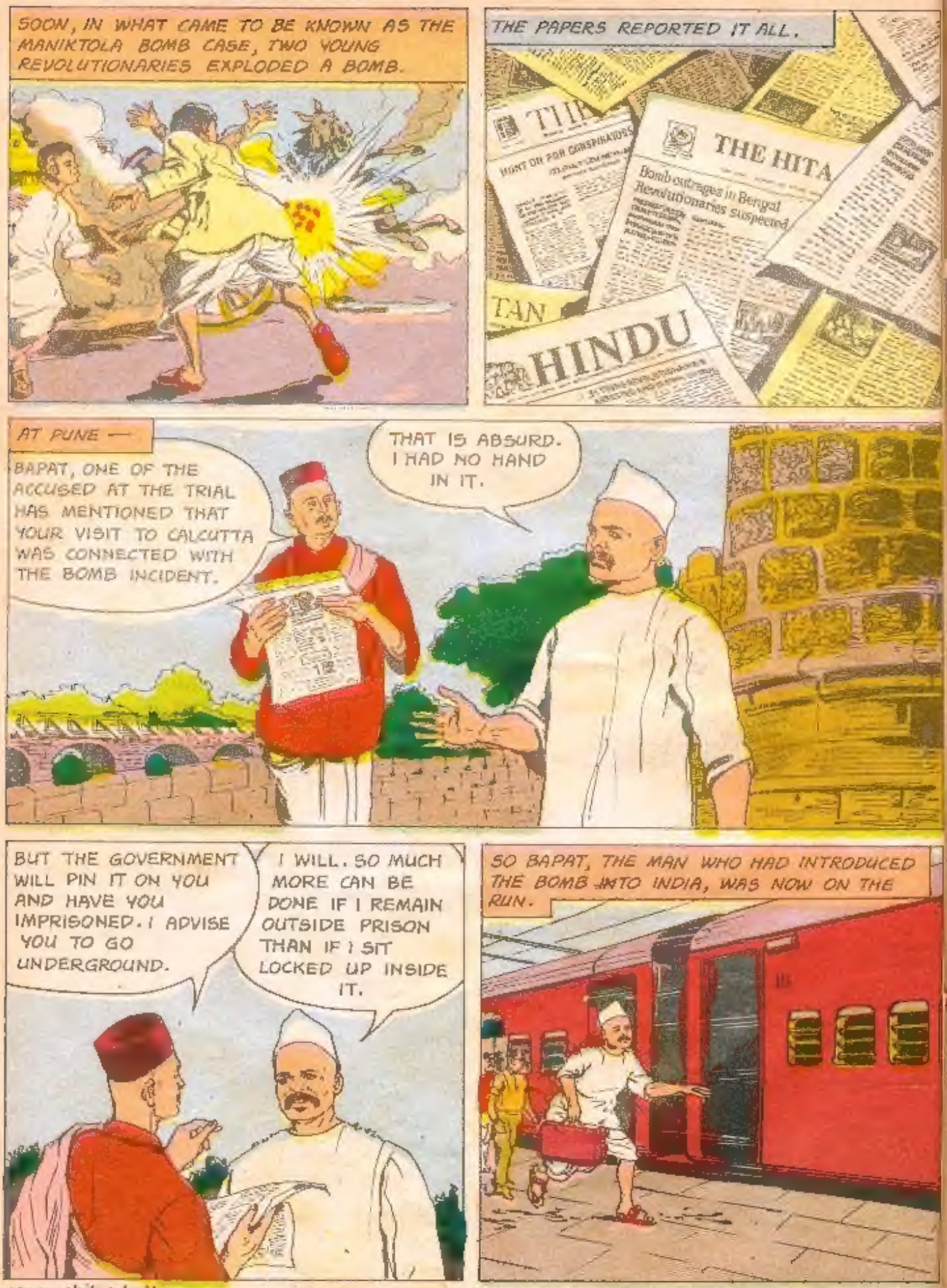
HMMM... SOMETHING IMPRESSIVE AND DIGNIFIED ABOUT HIM...

YOU MAY SEARCH MY BAGS, IF YOU WISH.

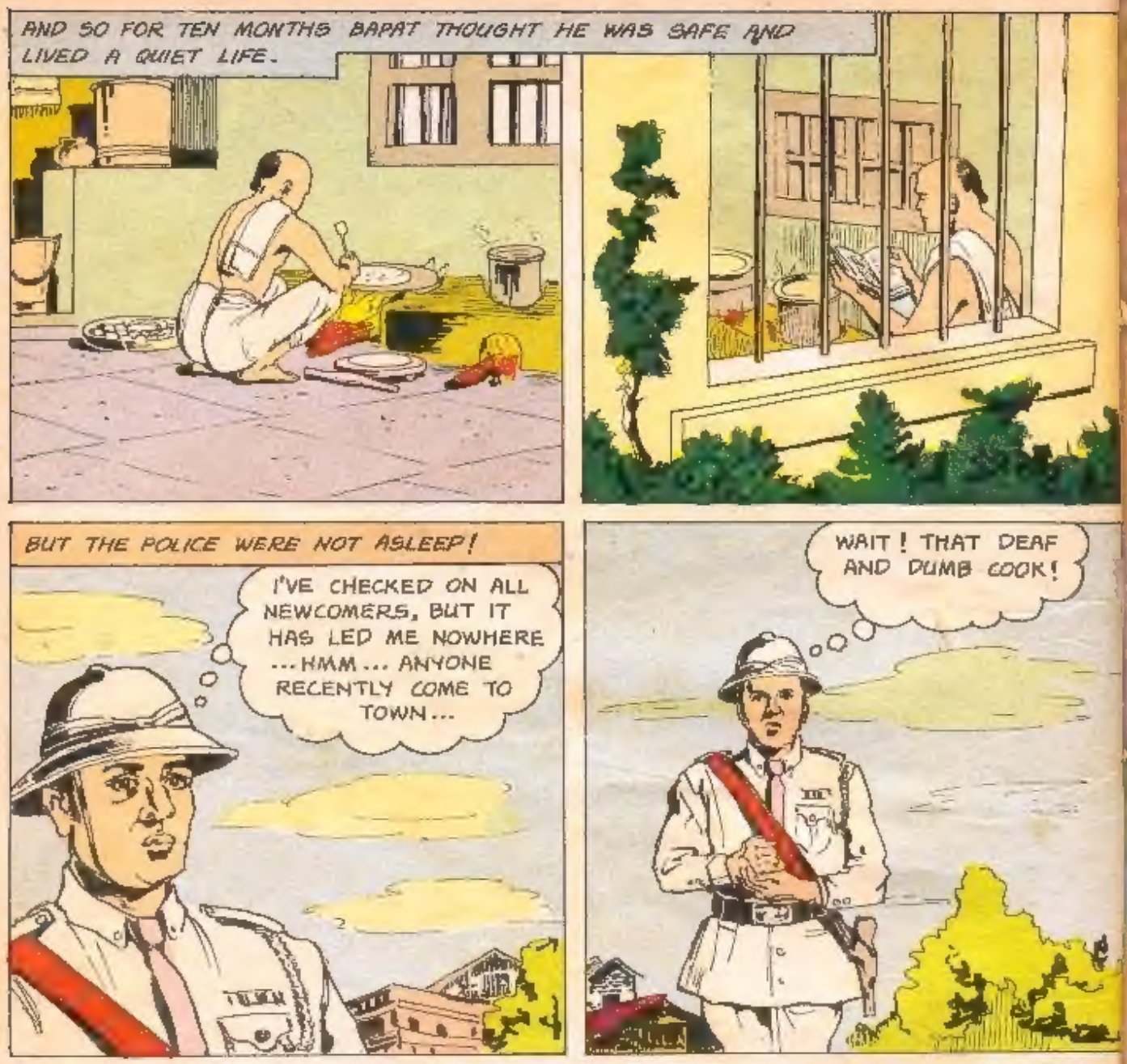
NO — PASS ON, SIR. AND GOOD DAY TO YOU.

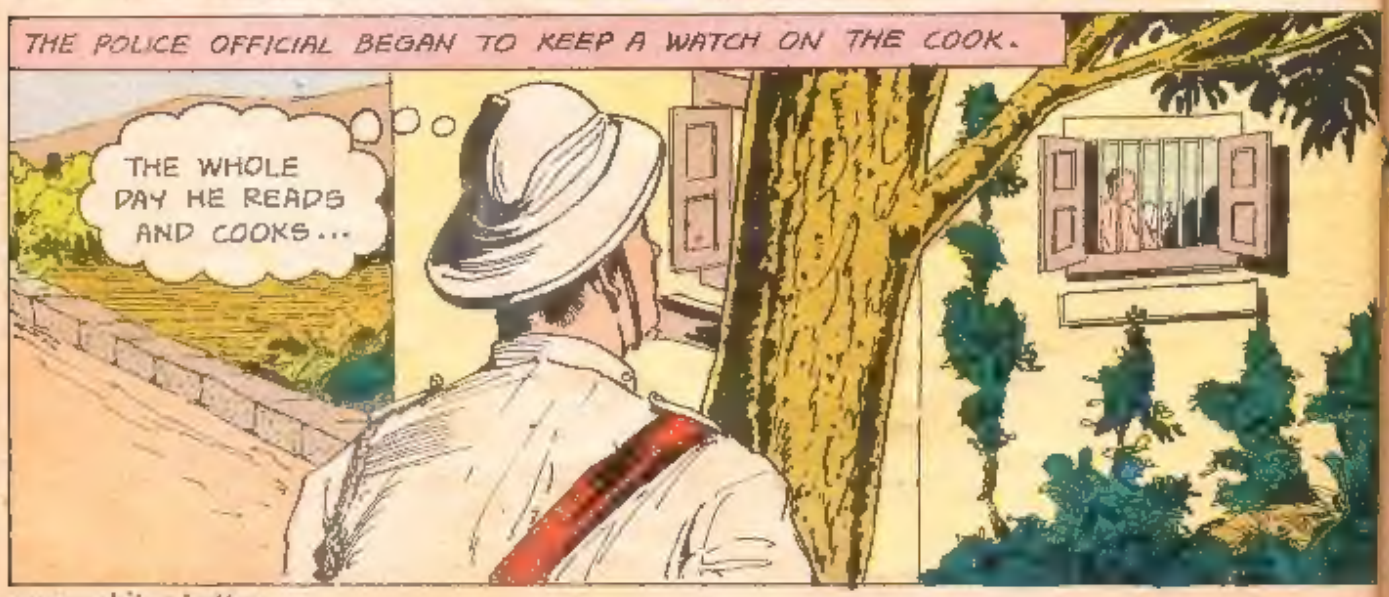
BAPAT MANAGED TO GET AWAY WITH THE TWO REVOLVERS CONCEALED IN HIS CLOTHES AND THE COPIES OF THE BOMB-MANUAL IN HIS SUITCASE.

THESE COPIES WERE SOON DISTRIBUTED. LATER BAPAT WENT TO CALCUTTA TO MEET HIS COLLEAGUE, HEMACHANDRA DAS.
WELCOME, BAPAT. THE KNOWLEDGE YOU AND I GAINED IN PARIS IS BEARING FRUIT HERE.
MAY MORE SUCH LABORATORIES SPRING UP ALL OVER OUR BELOVED LAND! I AWAIT THE DAY WHEN WE GO INTO ACTION.
THAT DAY IS JUST ROUND THE CORNER. OUR FIRST TARGET IS GOING TO BE A TOP BRITISH OFFICIAL.
DAS... WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? YOU PLAN TO EXPLODE A BOMB AND...
...KILL! YES.
KILLING A FEW PEOPLE IS NOT GOING TO LEAD US FAR. IF OURS IS TO BE A COUNTRY-WIDE ARMED STRUGGLE, WE MUST FIRST BUILD A NETWORK OF SECRET SOCIETIES ...BOMB FACTORIES...
I DISAGREE, BAPAT. UNLESS WE ACT NOW WE'LL NEVER MAKE A BEGINNING.
THE TWO FRIENDS PARTED AND A WORRIED BAPAT LEFT BENGAL.


SOON, IN WHAT CAME TO BE KNOWN AS THE MANIKTOLA BOMB CASE, TWO YOUNG REVOLUTIONARIES EXPLODED A BOMB.
THE PAPERS REPORTED IT ALL.
THE HITA
Bomb outrages in Bengal
Revolutionaries suspected
HINDU
AT PUNE —
BAPAT, ONE OF THE ACCUSED AT THE TRIAL HAS MENTIONED THAT YOUR VISIT TO CALCUTTA WAS CONNECTED WITH THE BOMB INCIDENT.
THAT IS ABSURD. I HAD NO HAND IN IT.
BUT THE GOVERNMENT WILL PIN IT ON YOU AND HAVE YOU IMPRISONED. I ADVISE YOU TO GO UNDERGROUND.
I WILL. SO MUCH MORE CAN BE DONE IF I REMAIN OUTSIDE PRISON THAN IF I SIT LOCKED UP INSIDE IT.
SO BAPAT, THE MAN WHO HAD INTRODUCED THE BOMB INTO INDIA, WAS NOW ON THE RUN.

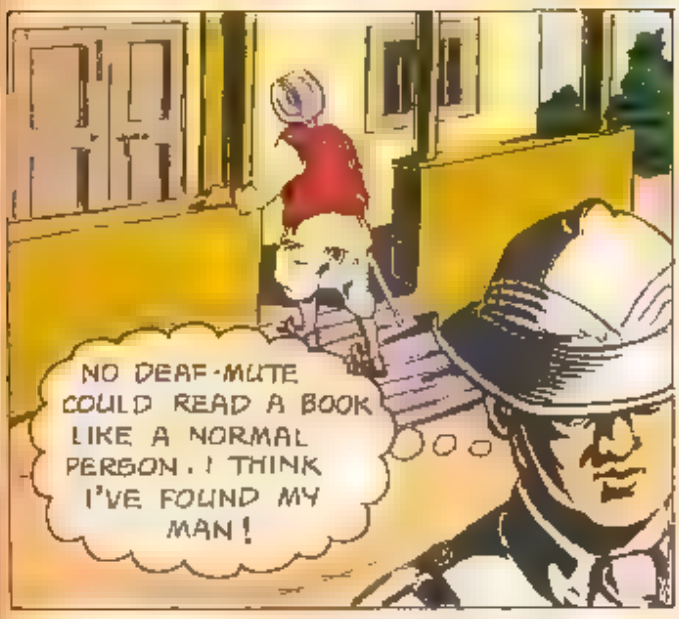
BAPAT EVADES THE POLICE

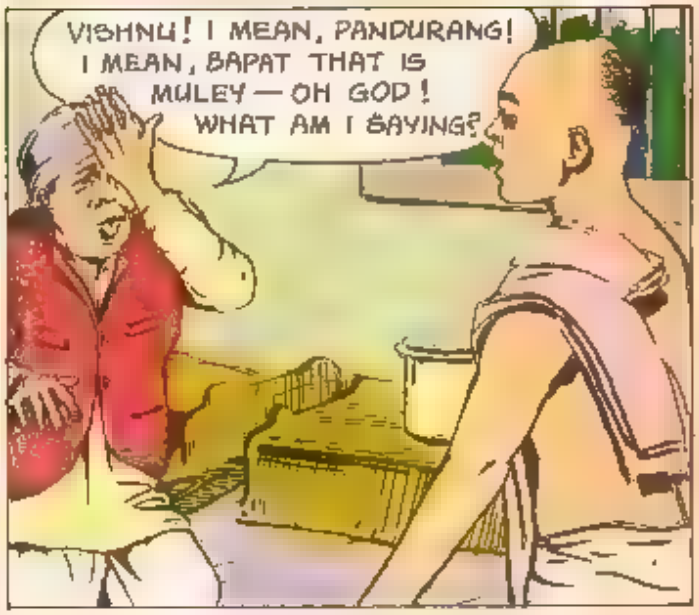

AND SO FOR TEN MONTHS BAPAT THOUGHT HE WAS SAFE AND LIVED A QUIET LIFE.
BUT THE POLICE WERE NOT ASLEEP!
I'VE CHECKED ON ALL NEWCOMERS, BUT IT HAS LED ME NOWHERE ...HMM... ANYONE RECENTLY COME TO TOWN...
WAIT! THAT DEAF AND DUMB COOK!


THE POLICE OFFICIAL BEGAN TO KEEP A WATCH ON THE COOK.
THE WHOLE DAY HE READS AND COOKS...

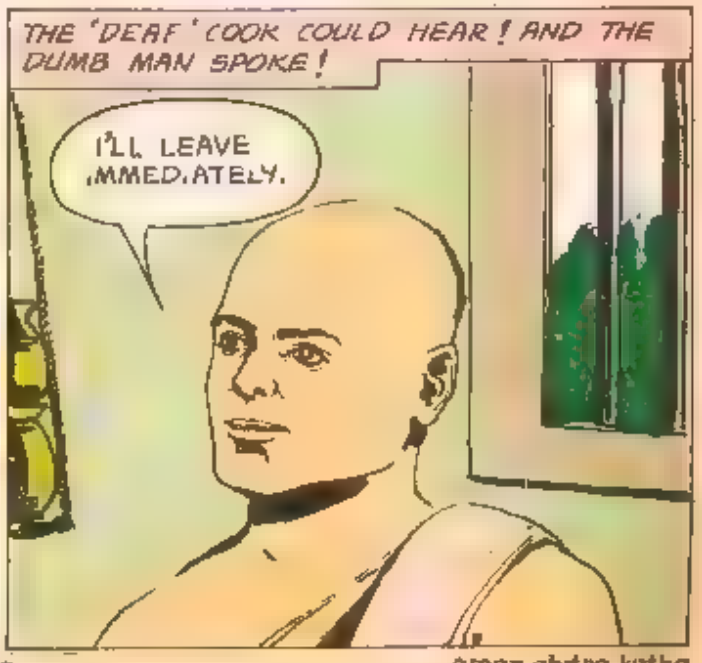
...COOKS AND READS. HE DOES NOT MEET ANYONE. HE SPENDS ALL HIS TIME COOKING AND..

...READING?


NO DEAF-MUTE COULD READ A BOOK LIKE A NORMAL PERSON. I THINK I'VE FOUND MY MAN!


VISHNU! I MEAN, PANDURANG! I MEAN, BAPAT THAT IS MULEY — OH GOD! WHAT AM I SAYING?

LEAVE THIS PLACE AT ONCE! THE POLICE HAVE FOUND YOU OUT


THE 'DEAF' COOK COULD HEAR! AND THE DUMB MAN SPOKE!
I'LL LEAVE IMMEDIATELY.

SOON AFTER, AT BETAI IN BADHWANI STATE, CENTRAL INDIA, A FARMER NAMED PURUSHOTTAM SAKHARAM VAIDYA MADE HIS APPEARANCE.

BAPAT, THIS IS THE FARMHOUSE AND LAND WE HAVE BOUGHT FOR YOU.

IT IS IDEAL — FAR FROM CITY AND TOWN THANK YOU BUT CALL ME VAIDYA

BUT IT'S TOO QUIET AND THEY SAY THIS PLACE IS HAUNTED...

GOOD! IF I FEEL LONELY, THE GHOSTS WILL KEEP ME COMPANY

MEANWHILE, IN PARNER —

WHERE IS YOUR SON? YOU ARE FLOUTING THE LAW BY HIDING HIS WHEREABOUTS. WHERE IS HE?

WE DON'T KNOW ANYTHING.. PLEASE GO AWAY

AT THE HOUSE OF BAPAT'S BROTHER-IN-LAW, WHERE BAPAT'S WIFE, RUKMINIBAI WAS STAYING —

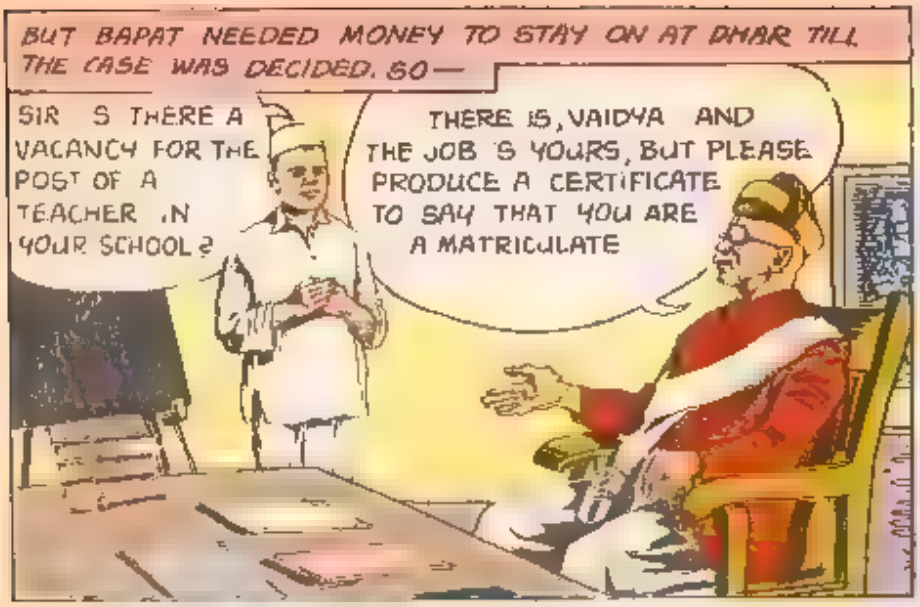
...KRISHNARAO BHAVE, WE WARN YOU. YOU WILL LOSE YOUR JOB FOR GIVING SHELTER TO A REVOLUTIONARY'S WIFE.

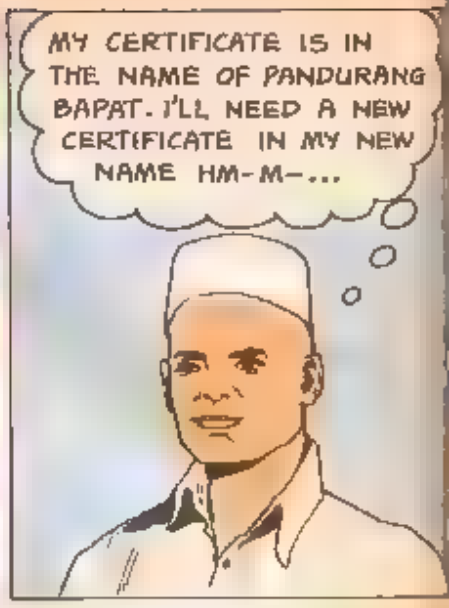
THERE IS A CASH REWARD ON HIS HEAD. BAPAT WILL BE CAUGHT ANYWAY, SO YOU MAY AS WELL TELL US RIGHT NOW WHERE HE IS!

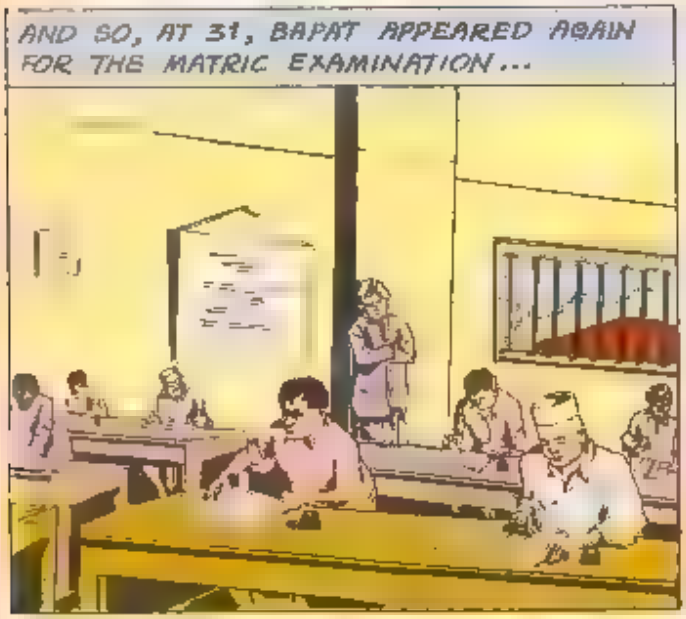
THE POLICE HARASSED BAPAT'S FAMILY...

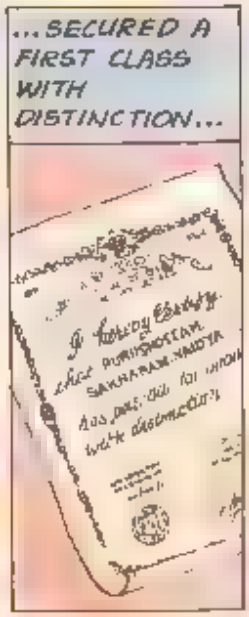
..BUT NO ONE LET HIM DOWN; SO BAPAT COULD CONTINUE ON HIS TRAVELS, INCOGNITO.

FOR A WHILE, BAPAT STAYED WITH A FRIEND AT BADHWANI. THERE HE MET SITABAI, WIFE OF ANOTHER FRIEND.
SITABA, YOU LOOK UNHAPPY. WHAT IS THE MATTER?
BAPAT SAHEB, WHEN YOUR FRIEND MARRIED ME, I WAS A WIDOW. I HAD A DAUGHTER BY MY FIRST MARRIAGE. HER NAME IS MALATI.
I HAD ENTRUSTED HER TO A WOMAN NAMED TANIBAI, WHO HAS TURNED OUT TO BE UNSCRUPULOUS. I AM NOW AFRAID TANIBAI WILL SPOIL MY DAUGHTER'S LIFE.
I THINK ALL THE TIME OF MY YOUNG CHILD .. AND YET, TO BRING HER HERE TO MY NEW HUSBAND'S HOUSE... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO...
SITABAI, I KNOW WHAT TO DO. I WILL FILE A SUIT FOR THE CUSTODY OF MALATI.
BUT... YOU NEED TO KEEP YOUR IDENTITY HIDDEN AT ALL COSTS... YOU WILL BE RISKING TOO MUCH...
BUT BAPAT, OR VAIDYA AS HE WAS NOW CALLED, WENT TO DHAR AND FILED THE SUIT AGAINST TANIBAI.

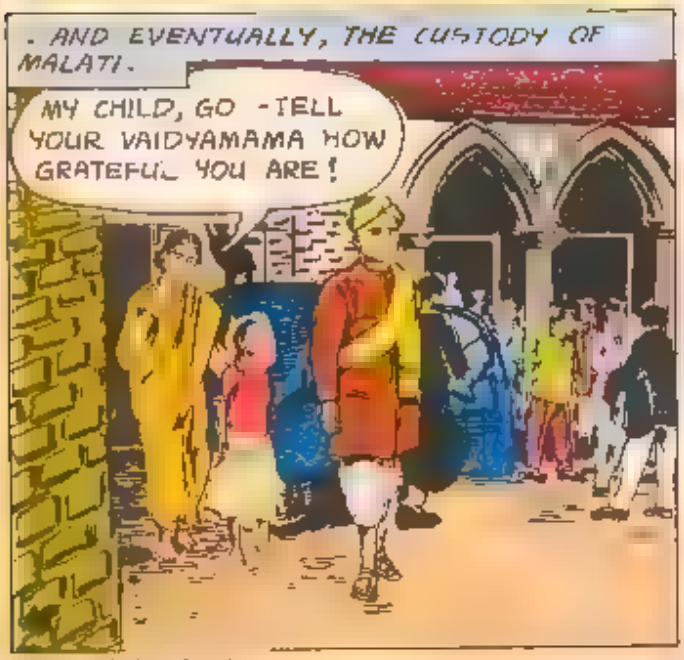

BUT BAPAT NEEDED MONEY TO STAY ON AT DHAR TILL THE CASE WAS DECIDED. SO—
SIR S THERE A VACANCY FOR THE POST OF A TEACHER IN YOUR SCHOOL?
THERE IS, VAIDYA AND THE JOB S YOURS, BUT PLEASE PRODUCE A CERTIFICATE TO SAY THAT YOU ARE A MATRICULATE


MY CERTIFICATE IS IN THE NAME OF PANDURANG BAPAT. I'LL NEED A NEW CERTIFICATE IN MY NEW NAME HM-M-...


AND SO, AT 31, BAPAT APPEARED AGAIN FOR THE MATRIC EXAMINATION...


...SECURED A FIRST CLASS WITH DISTINCTION...

. GOT HIS JOB...


. AND EVENTUALLY, THE CUSTODY OF MALATI.
MY CHILD, GO - TELL YOUR VAIDYAMAMA HOW GRATEFUL YOU ARE!

VAIDYAMAMA! MY VAIDYAMAMA!
BAPAT SAW THAT MALATI WA WELL TAKEN CARE OF.

BAPAT RETURNS HOME

FOR OVER FOUR YEARS BAPAT MANAGED TO EVADE THE POLICE. BUT, FINALLY, A FRIEND BETRAYED HIM AND HE WAS ARRESTED.

NOW, BAPAT, YOU ARE ORDERED TO GIVE A STATEMENT OF ALL THAT YOU DID SINCE YOU WENT UNDER-GROUND.

WILL NOT!

IS NOT THE DISTRIBUTION OF THIS BOMB-MANUAL IN THE COUNTRY YOUR DOING?

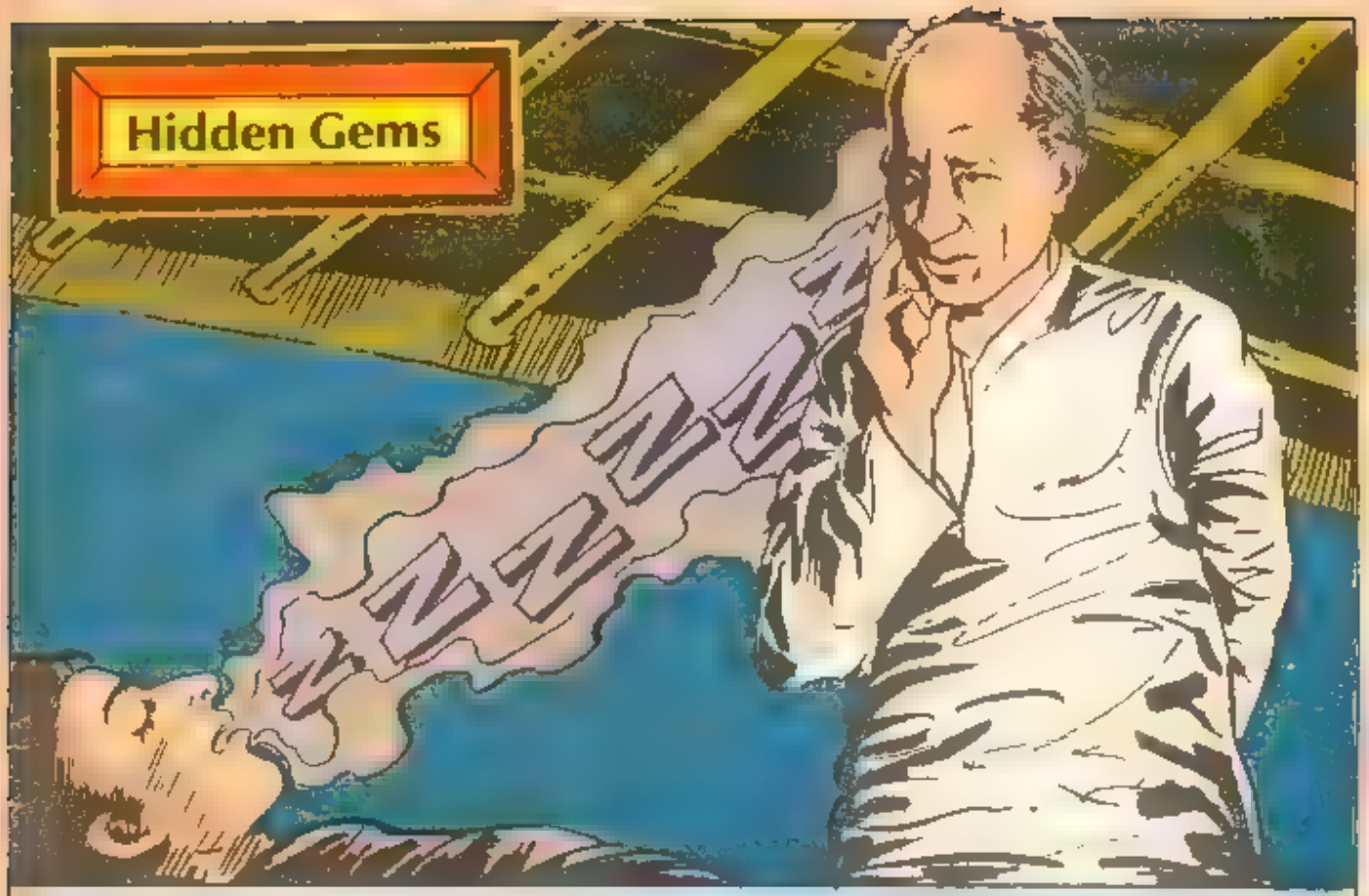
I WILL NOT ANSWER.

LATER, AT DELHI.

DO YOU FAVOUR THE ACT OF BOMB-OUTRAGE?

BOMB OUTRAGE? YOU MEAN THE PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO ARM THEMSELVES AND OVERTHROW THE FOREIGN YOKE?

CONTD ON PAGE



The Man who snored

Once, when Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was on a visit to Madras he stayed at a friend's house, near the beach

One night, tired after a busy day, he lay down, hoping to get a good night's rest. But try as he might, he could not fall asleep. What kept him awake, he soon realized, was a rumbling sound coming from beyond his room. He rose and went outside to find out what it could be

There on the verandah lay a young man. He was fast asleep, and ... he was snoring!

Panditji went to his host and requested him to ask the young man to sleep elsewhere or to allow him to shift his own bedding to the sea-shore.

Years later, on that very sea-shore, Pandit Nehru unveiled the statue of a renowned Indian

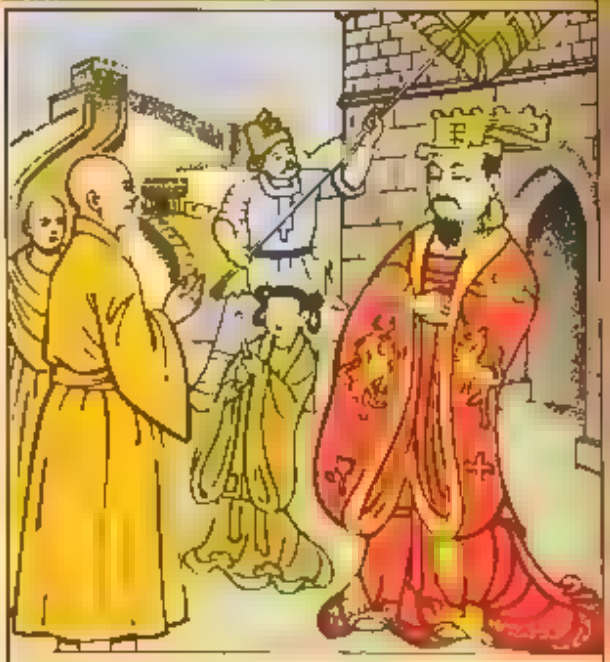
And that Indian was none other than the young man who had once disturbed Panditji's sleep – Shri Kamaraj Nadar, who as President of the Indian National Congress played an important role in the affairs of our country.

By : P B Shaktivel – MADRAS.

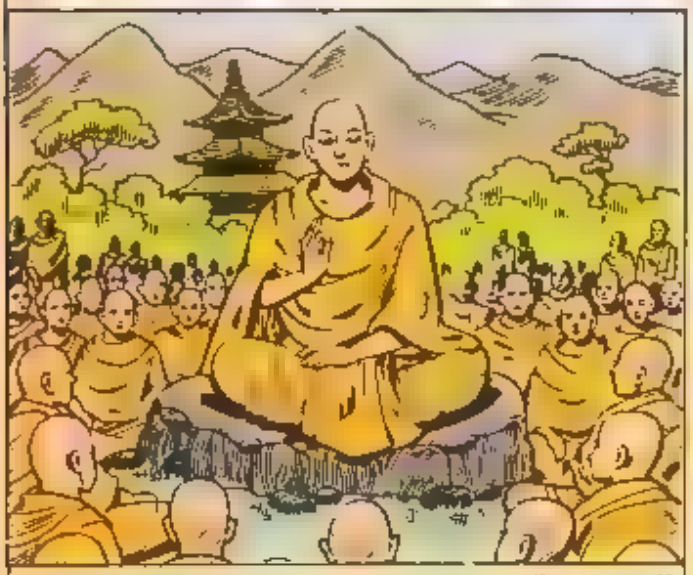
THOSE WHO WENT TO CHINA

Script Swarn Khandpur
Illustrations . S. K. Parab

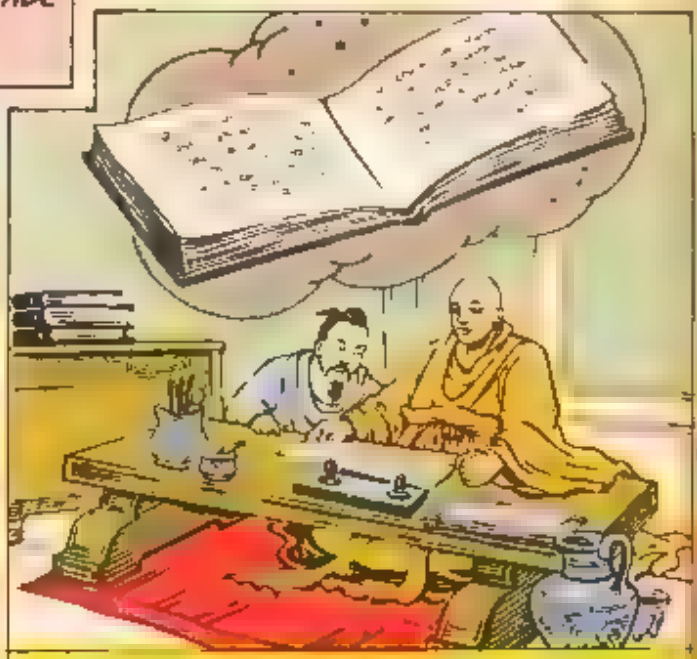
AS EARLY AS 65 A.D. TWO BUDDHIST MONKS, DHARMARAKSHA AND KASHYAPA MATANGA, MADE THE PERILOUS JOURNEY TO CHINA CARRYING SACRED BOOKS ON A WHITE HORSE.



THEY WERE WELCOMED BY THE CHINESE EMPEROR, MING TI, WHO BUILT A MONASTERY FOR THEM AND CALLED IT THE WHITE HORSE MONASTERY



AFTER THAT, SEVERAL HUNDRED BUDDHIST MONKS FROM OUR COUNTRY VISITED CHINA FROM TIME TO TIME. AMONG THEM PARAM ARTHA, KUMARAJIVA, BODHIDHARMA AND JIVAGUPTA BECAME VERY FAMOUS.



THESE INDIAN SCHOLARS NOT ONLY CARRIED MANY SANSKRIT MANUSCRIPTS WITH THEM WHICH THEY TRANSLATED INTO CHINESE BUT SOME OF THEM ALSO WROTE ORIGINAL BOOKS IN THE CHINESE LANGUAGE.

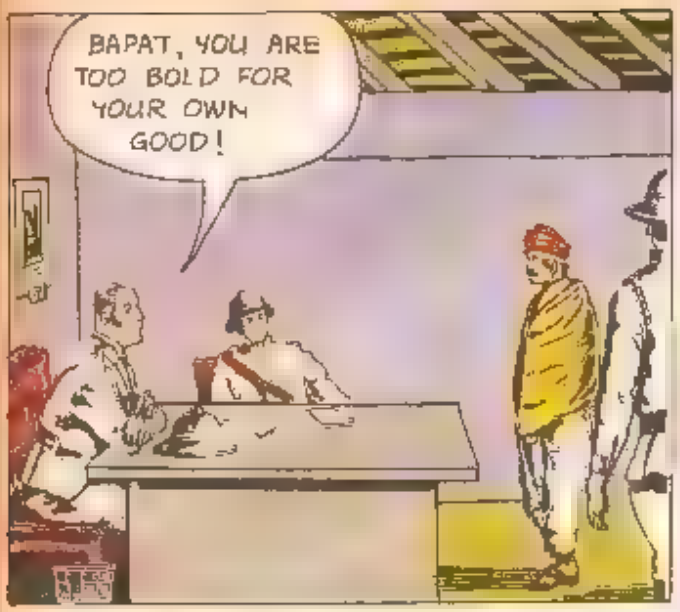
MANY INDIAN ARTISANS WERE INVITED FROM THE 'LAND OF THE BUDDHA' BY CHINESE RULERS TO CARVE CAVES, TO PAINT FRESCOES AND TO MAKE BUDDHA'S IMAGES

WITH THE DECLINE OF BUDDHISM IN INDIA, VISITS OF MONKS AND TEACHERS TO CHINA PRACTICALLY STOPPED.

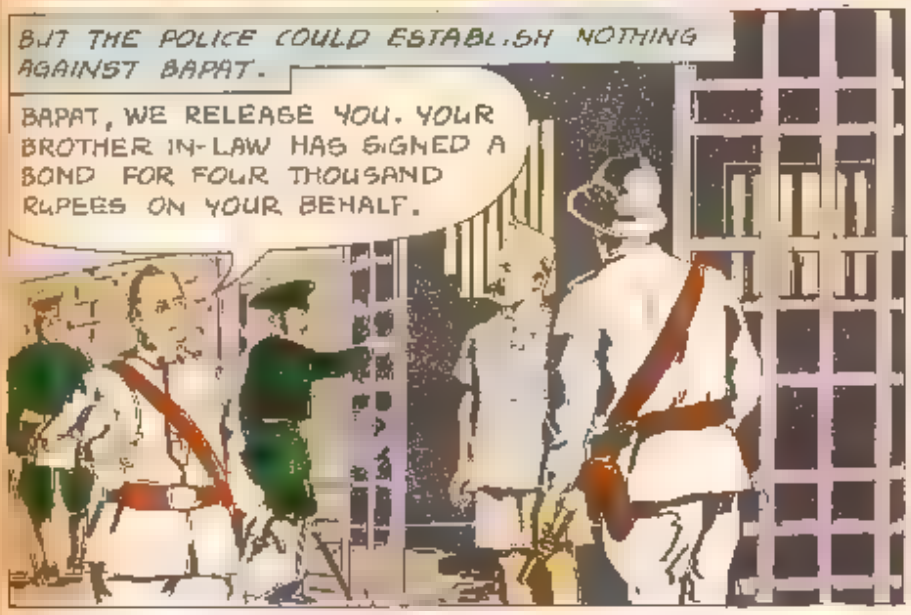
IN THE 14 TH CENTURY, MUHAMMAD TUGHLUQ SENT IBN BATUTA AS HIS AMBASSADOR TO THE CHINESE COURT.

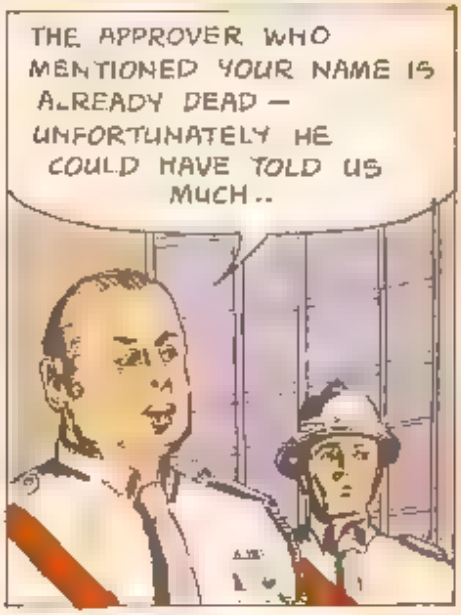
THEN IN 1924, RABINDRANATH TAGORE VISITED CHINA TO RE-ESTABLISH CULTURAL TIES...

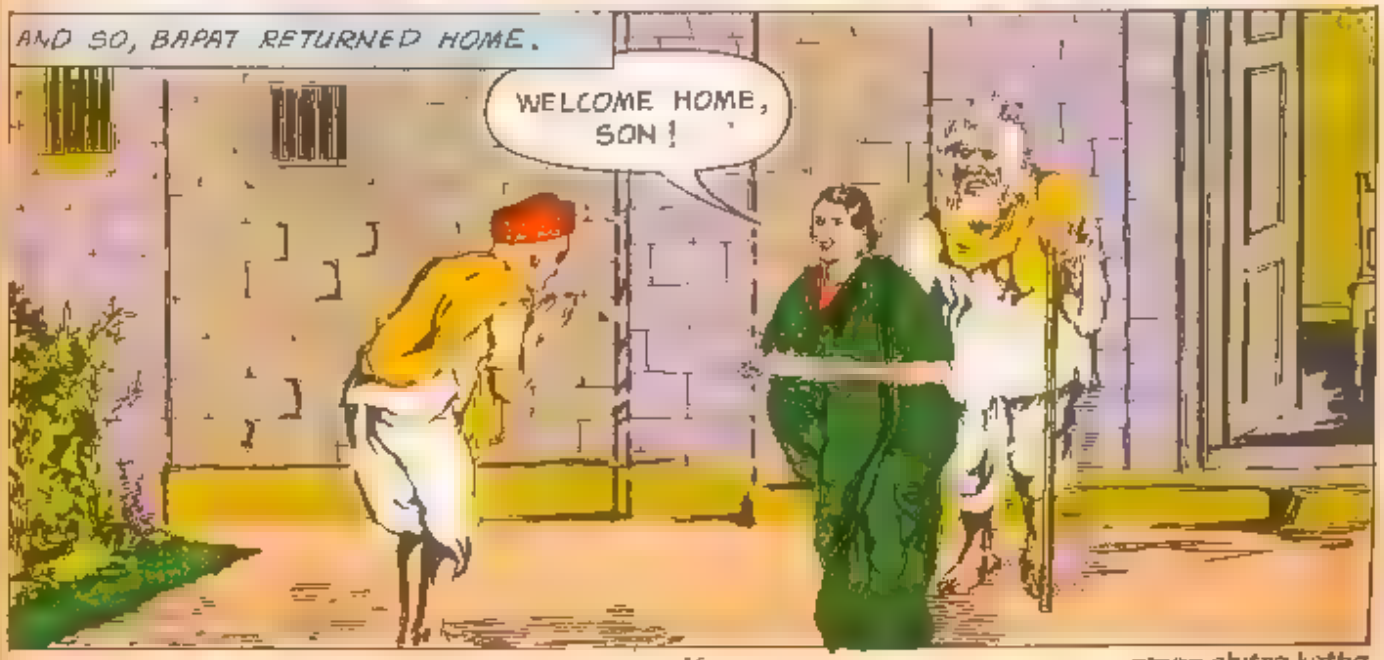
AND IN 1954, INDIAN AND CHINESE LEADERS EXCHANGED VISITS AND ESTABLISHED DIPLOMATIC TIES.


BAPAT, YOU ARE TOO BOLD FOR YOUR OWN GOOD!

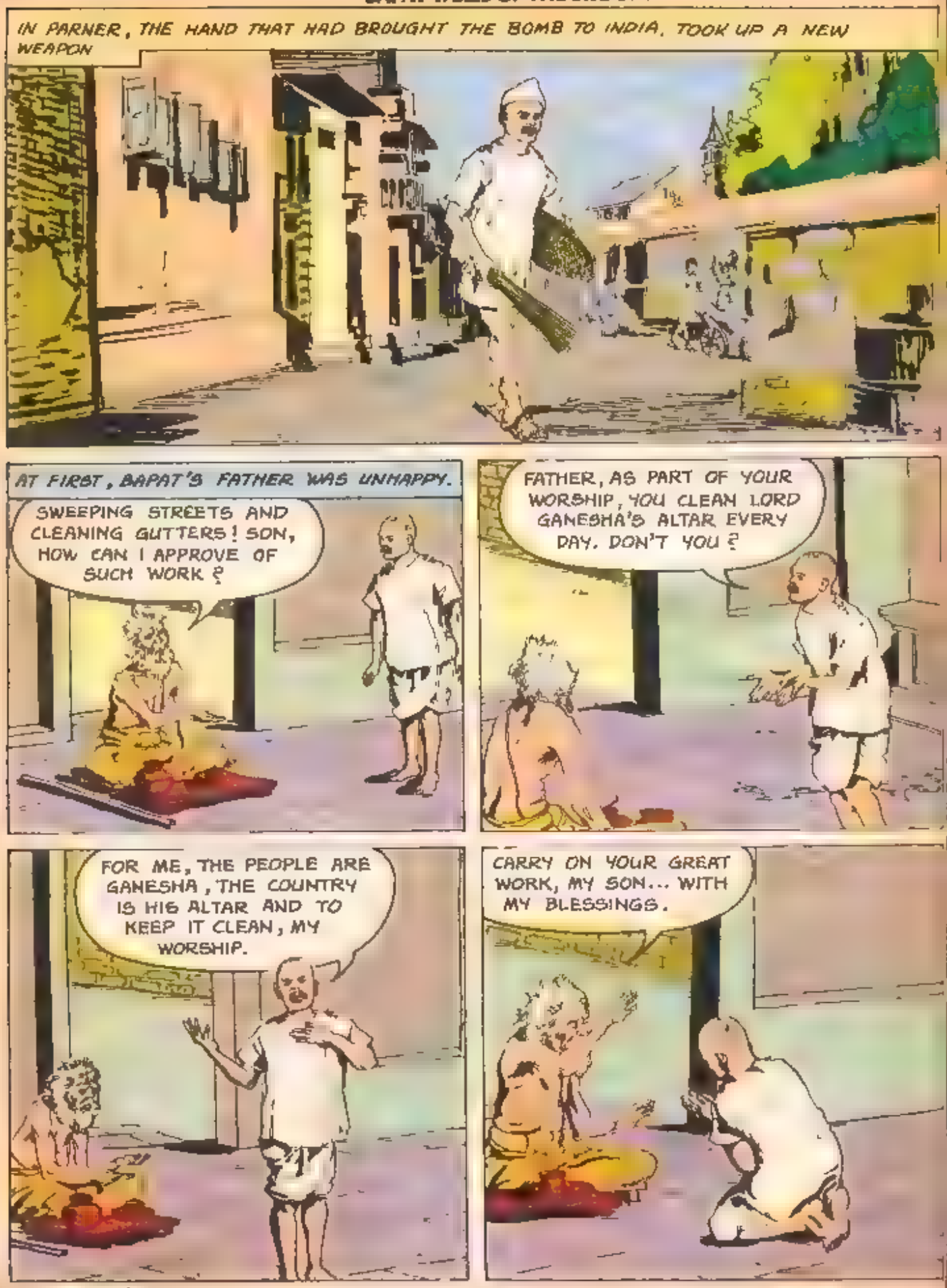
MR. CLEAVELAND, PRODUCE ME IN A COURT OF LAW IF YOU CAN PROVE THAT I HAD A HAND IN THE BOMB CASE.


BUT THE POLICE COULD ESTABLISH NOTHING AGAINST BAPAT.
BAPAT, WE RELEASE YOU. YOUR BROTHER IN-LAW HAS SIGNED A BOND FOR FOUR THOUSAND RUPEES ON YOUR BEHALF.

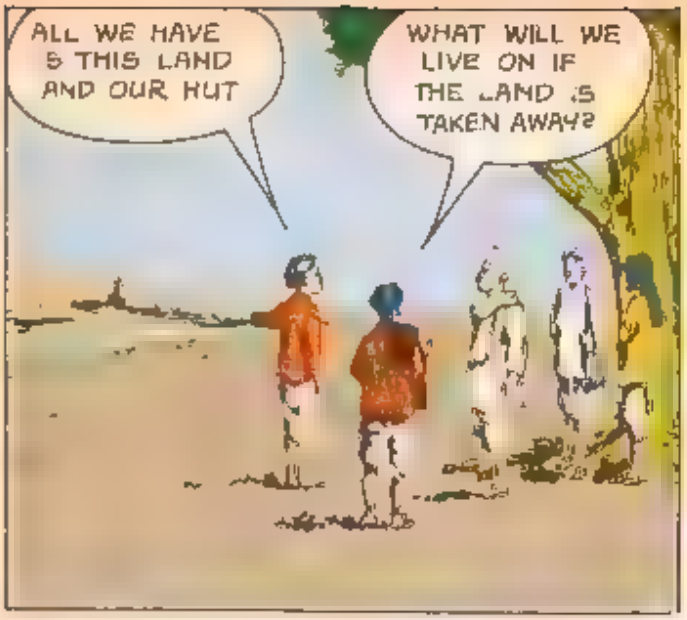

THE APPROVER WHO MENTIONED YOUR NAME IS ALREADY DEAD — UNFORTUNATELY HE COULD HAVE TOLD US MUCH..


AND SO, BAPAT RETURNED HOME.
WELCOME HOME, SON!

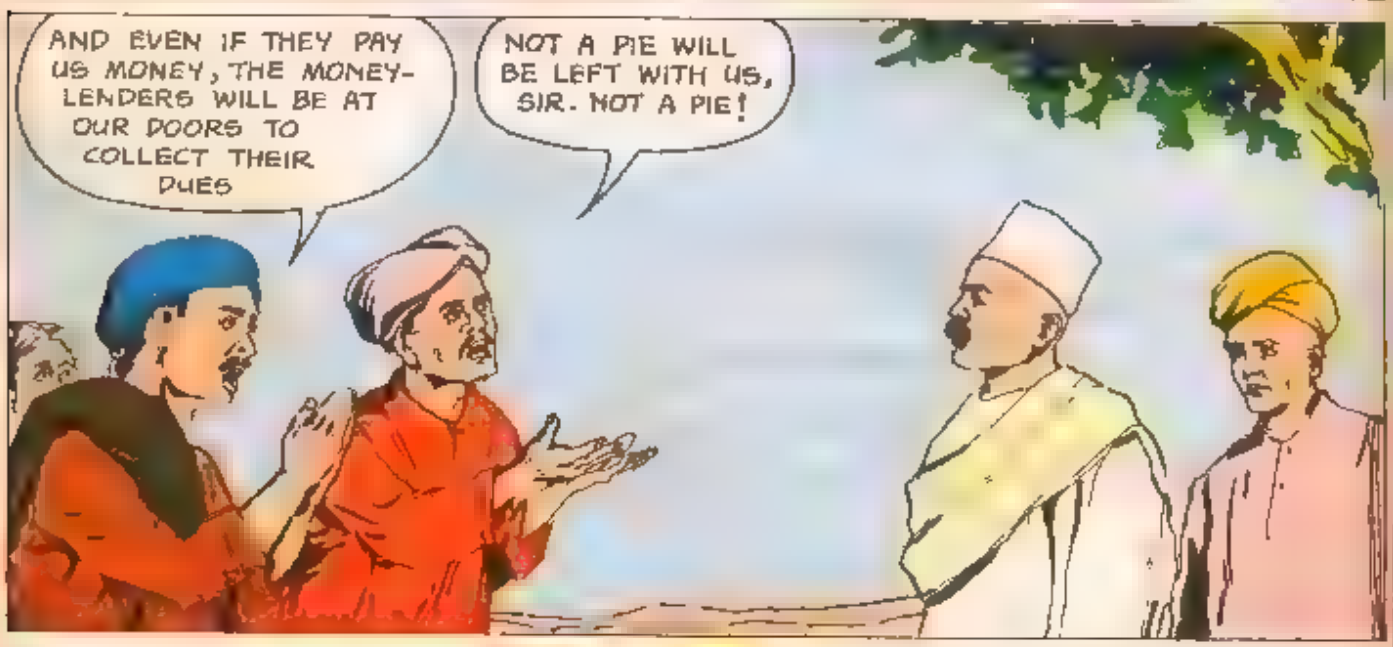
BAPAT TAKES UP THE BROOM

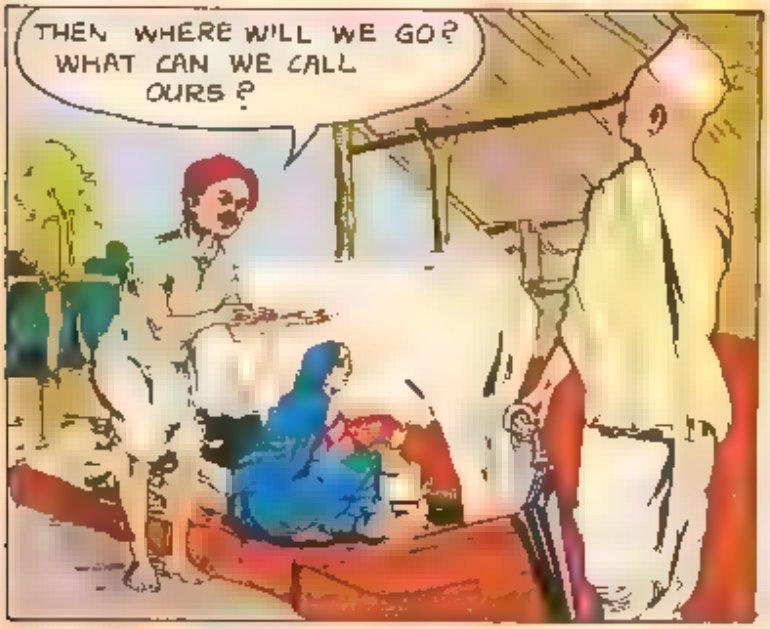


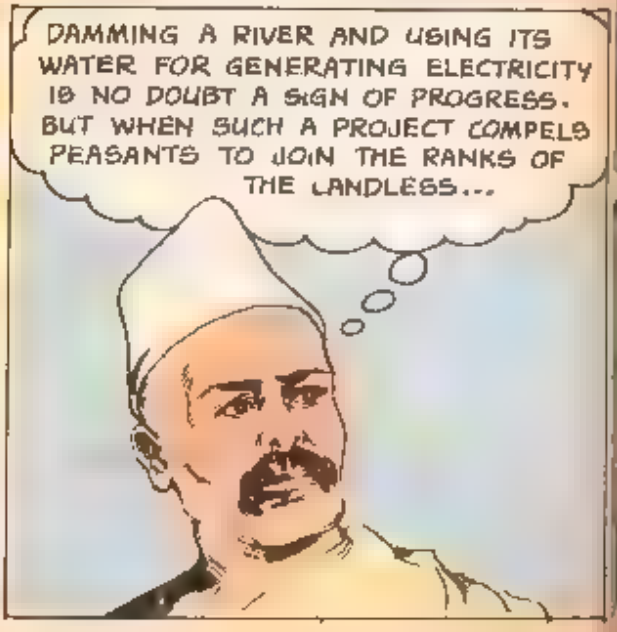
THE MULSHI UPRISING

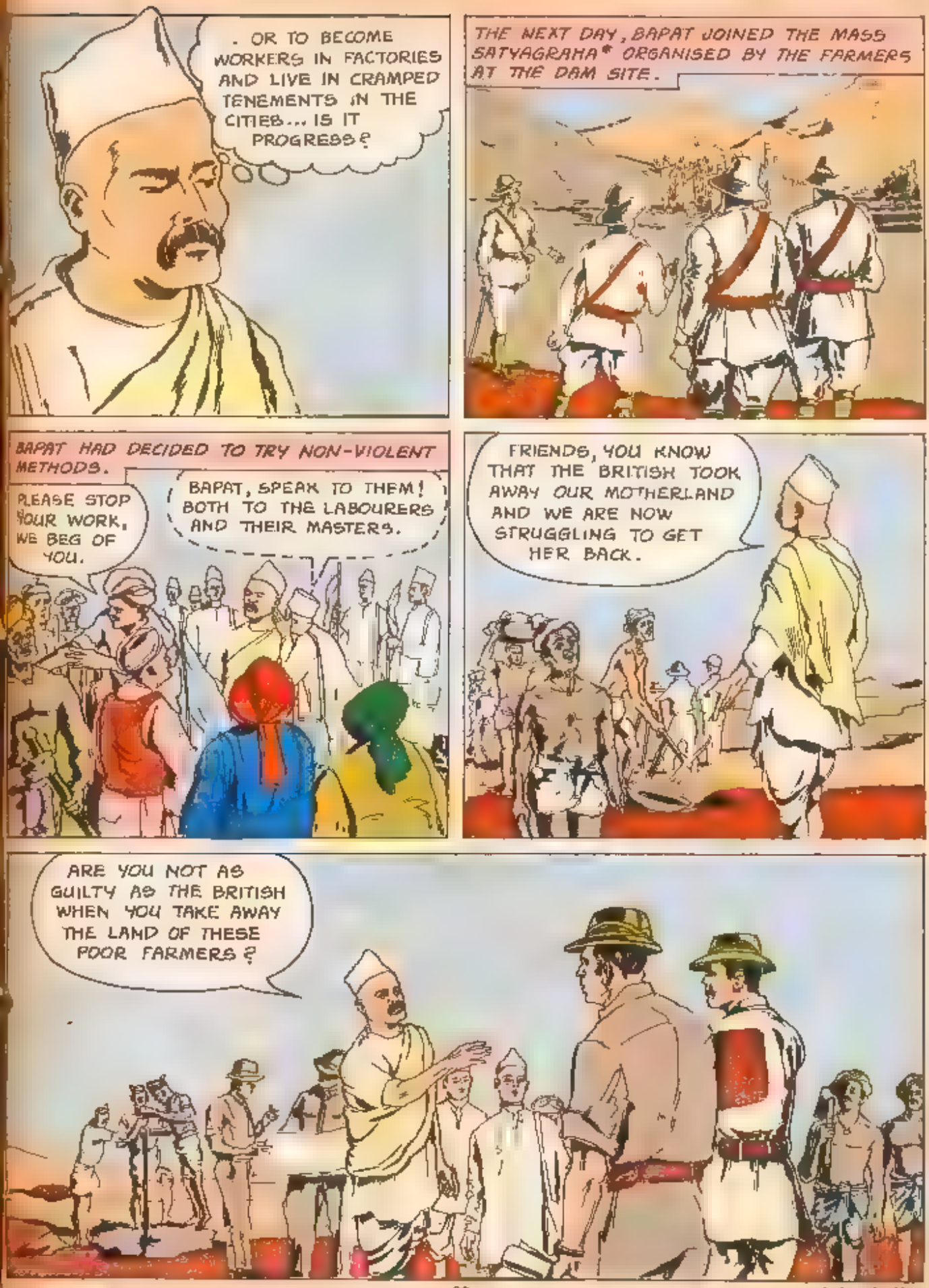

ALL WE HAVE IS THIS LAND AND OUR HUT
WHAT WILL WE LIVE ON IF THE LAND IS TAKEN AWAY?

THEY SAY THEY WILL GIVE US MONEY BUT NO MONEY IN THE WORLD CAN REPLACE A MAN'S ANCESTRAL LAND.


AND EVEN IF THEY PAY US MONEY, THE MONEY-LENDERS WILL BE AT OUR DOORS TO COLLECT THEIR DUES
NOT A PIE WILL BE LEFT WITH US, SIR. NOT A PIE!

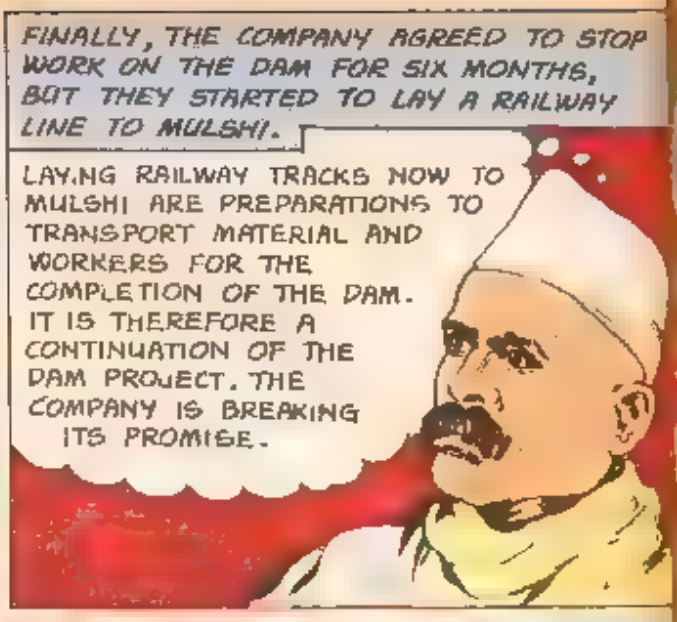

THEN WHERE WILL WE GO? WHAT CAN WE CALL OURS?

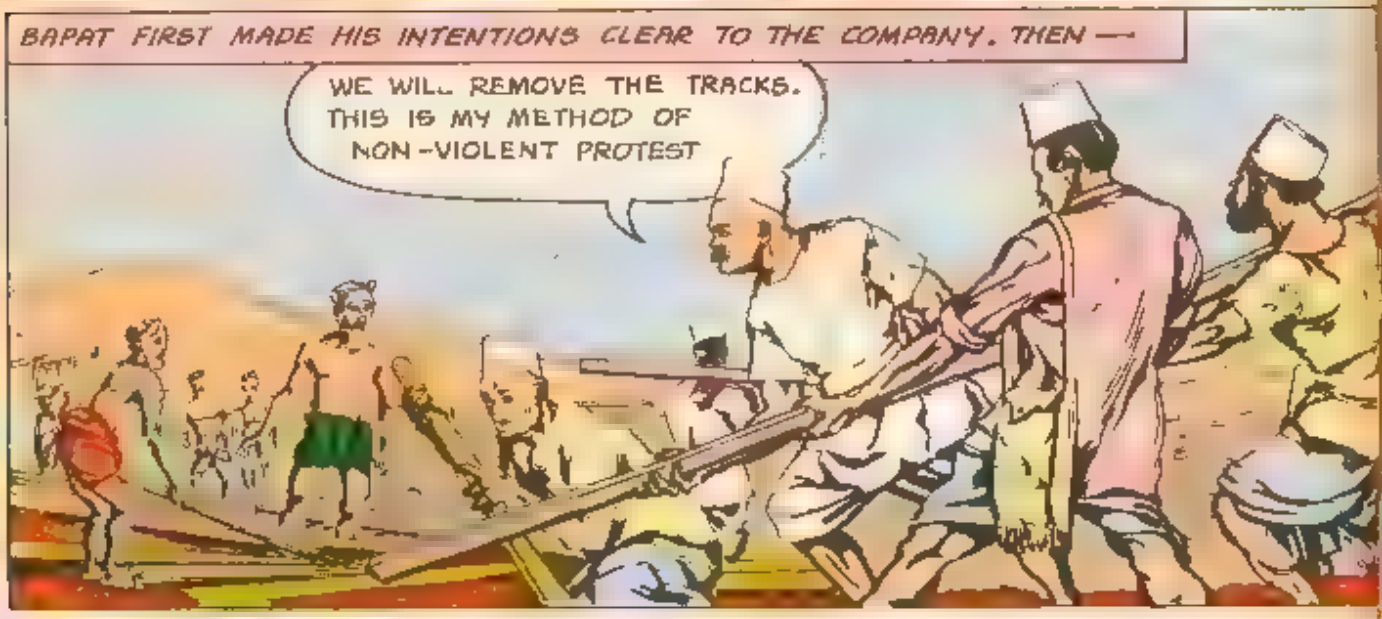

DAMMING A RIVER AND USING ITS WATER FOR GENERATING ELECTRICITY IS NO DOUBT A SIGN OF PROGRESS. BUT WHEN SUCH A PROJECT COMPELS PEASANTS TO JOIN THE RANKS OF THE LANDLESS...

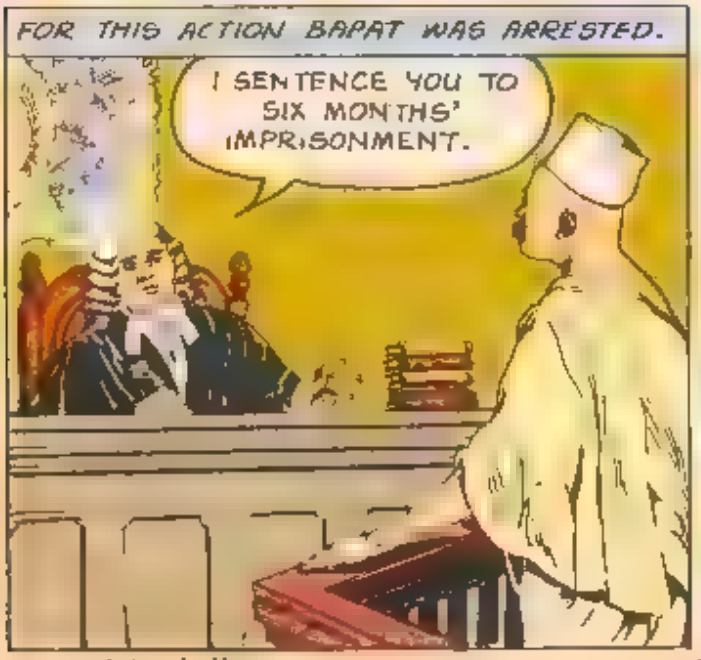

. OR TO BECOME WORKERS IN FACTORIES AND LIVE IN CRAMPED TENEMENTS IN THE CITIES... IS IT PROGRESS?
THE NEXT DAY, BAPAT JOINED THE MASS SATYAGRAHA* ORGANISED BY THE FARMERS AT THE DAM SITE.
BAPAT HAD DECIDED TO TRY NON-VIOLENT METHODS.
PLEASE STOP YOUR WORK, WE BEG OF YOU.
BAPAT, SPEAK TO THEM! BOTH TO THE LABOURERS AND THEIR MASTERS.
FRIENDS, YOU KNOW THAT THE BRITISH TOOK AWAY OUR MOTHERLAND AND WE ARE NOW STRUGGLING TO GET HER BACK.
ARE YOU NOT AS GUILTY AS THE BRITISH WHEN YOU TAKE AWAY THE LAND OF THESE POOR FARMERS?

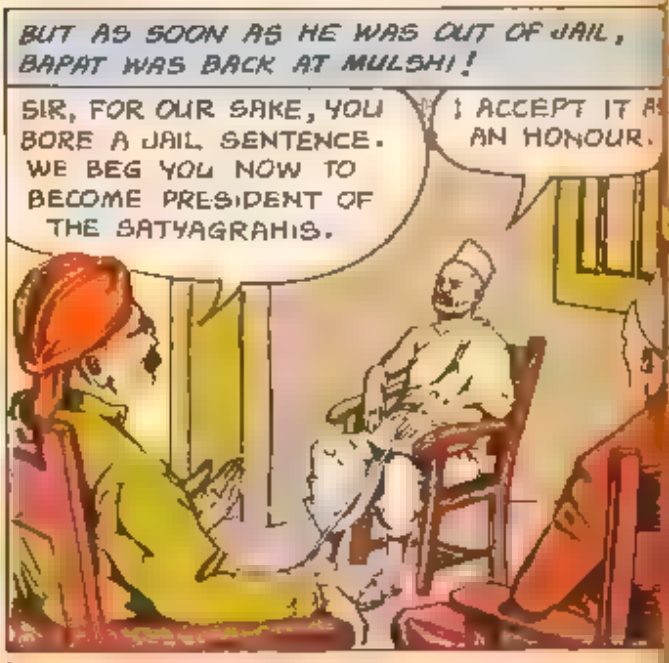
* PROTEST

HO, THERE! I WARN YOU. GET OUT OF THERE, OR WE WILL POUR HOT WATER ON ALL OF YOU!
DO AS YOU WISH. WE WILL GIVE UP OUR LIVES BUT NOT OUR LANDS!

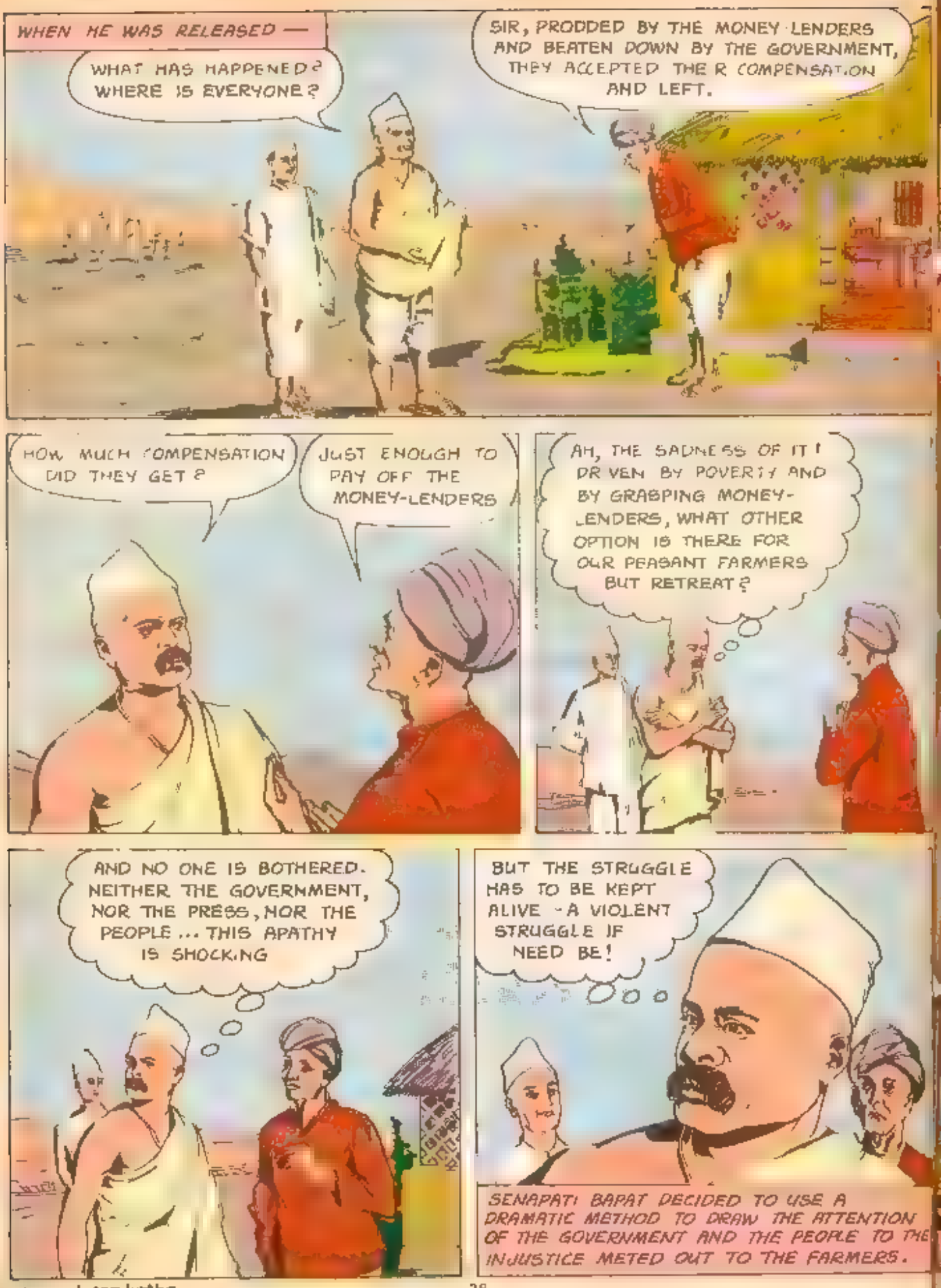

FINALLY, THE COMPANY AGREED TO STOP WORK ON THE DAM FOR SIX MONTHS, BUT THEY STARTED TO LAY A RAILWAY LINE TO MULSHI.
LAYING RAILWAY TRACKS NOW TO MULSHI ARE PREPARATIONS TO TRANSPORT MATERIAL AND WORKERS FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE DAM. IT IS THEREFORE A CONTINUATION OF THE DAM PROJECT. THE COMPANY IS BREAKING ITS PROMISE.


BAPAT FIRST MADE HIS INTENTIONS CLEAR TO THE COMPANY. THEN —
WE WILL REMOVE THE TRACKS. THIS IS MY METHOD OF NON-VIOLENT PROTEST


FOR THIS ACTION BAPAT WAS ARRESTED.
I SENTENCE YOU TO SIX MONTHS' IMPRISONMENT.


BUT AS SOON AS HE WAS OUT OF JAIL, BAPAT WAS BACK AT MULSHI!
SIR, FOR OUR SAKE, YOU BORE A JAIL SENTENCE. WE BEG YOU NOW TO BECOME PRESIDENT OF THE SATYAGRAHIS.
I ACCEPT IT AS AN HONOUR.

BAPAT WORKED CEASELESSLY AND WITH DEDICATION. HE TOURED MAHARASHTRA TO MOBILISE PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE MOVEMENT.
OURS IS A FIGHT FOR JUSTICE... PEASANTS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY ARE CONCERNED WITH THE STRUGGLE PUT UP BY THE PEASANTS OF MULSHI PET ..
.FOR MORE, MANY MORE DAMS WILL BE BUILT IN THE YEARS TO COME AND THOUSANDS OF VILLAGERS WILL BE DISPLACED.
MONEY IS NOT ENOUGH. WE WANT NEW LAND FOR THE LAND THAT WILL GO UNDER WATER. WE WANT REHABILITATION TO MAKE UP FOR EVICTION. OUR FIGHT CONTINUES TILL OUR DEMANDS ARE MET
WE ARE WITH YOU, SENAPATI!
YES. LEAD US, SENAPATI.
THUS A SENAPATI, A COMMANDER, WAS BORN - SENAPATI BAPAT.
BUT AGAIN, FOR HIS STRONG SPEECHES AND PROTEST MARCHES, SENAPATI BAPAT HAD TO GO TO JAIL TWICE, FOR SIX MONTHS AND THEN A YEAR


WHEN HE WAS RELEASED —
WHAT HAS HAPPENED? WHERE IS EVERYONE?
SIR, PRODDED BY THE MONEY LENDERS AND BEATEN DOWN BY THE GOVERNMENT, THEY ACCEPTED THE R COMPENSATION AND LEFT.
HOW MUCH COMPENSATION DID THEY GET?
JUST ENOUGH TO PAY OFF THE MONEY-LENDERS
AH, THE SADNESS OF IT! DRIVEN BY POVERTY AND BY GRASPING MONEY-LENDERS, WHAT OTHER OPTION IS THERE FOR OUR PEASANT FARMERS BUT RETREAT?
AND NO ONE IS BOTHERED. NEITHER THE GOVERNMENT, NOR THE PRESS, NOR THE PEOPLE ... THIS APATHY IS SHOCKING
BUT THE STRUGGLE HAS TO BE KEPT ALIVE - A VIOLENT STRUGGLE IF NEED BE!
SENAPATI BAPAT DECIDED TO USE A DRAMATIC METHOD TO DRAW THE ATTENTION OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE PEOPLE TO THE INJUSTICE METED OUT TO THE FARMERS.

SENAPATI BAPAT
MEANING
DARE
AH
AT ONCE, THE SATYAGRAHIS WENT TO THE POLICE-STATION.
WE SURRENDER! WE STOPPED A TRAIN, INJURED THE DRIVER AND PASSENGERS; BUT ONLY INJURED. ARREST US IF YOU WILL.
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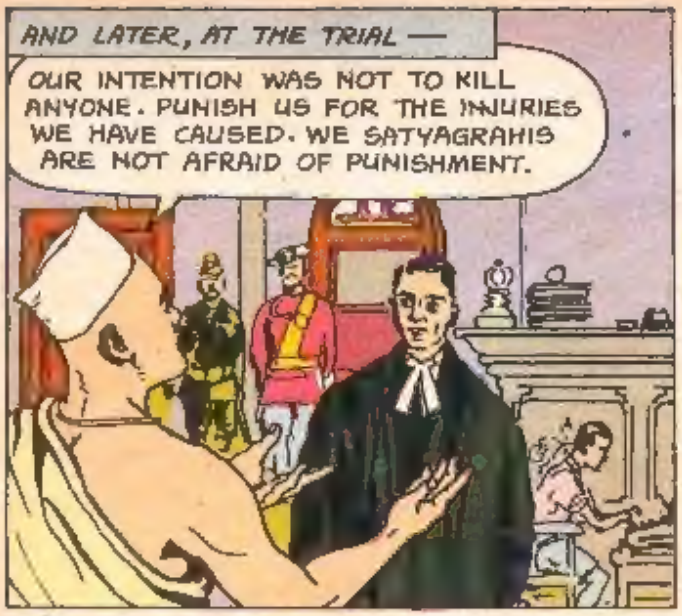
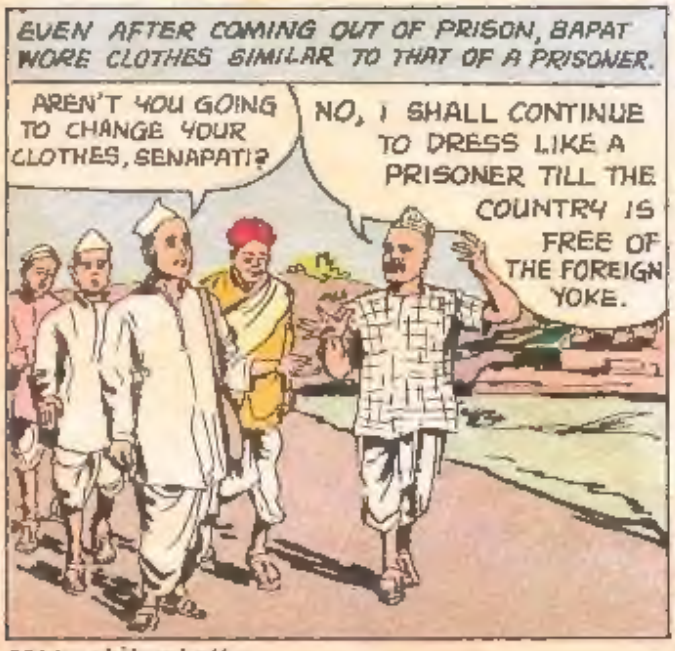
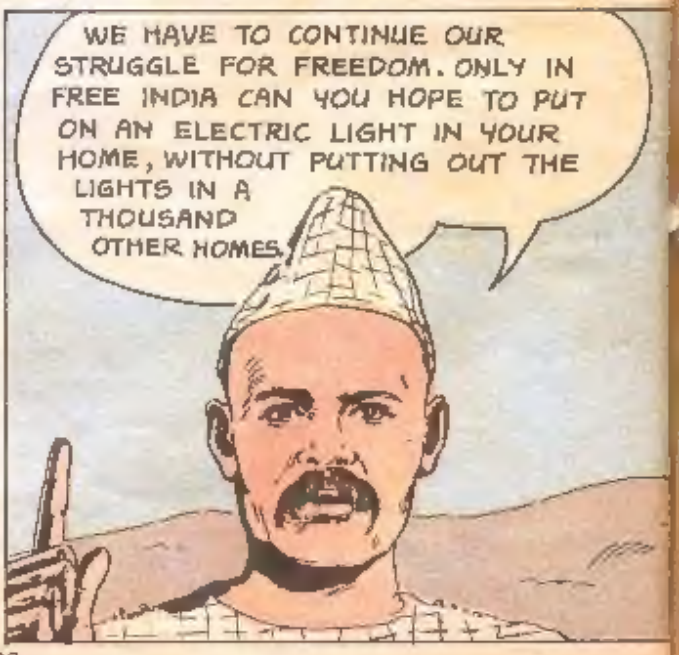

AND LATER, AT THE TRIAL —
OUR INTENTION WAS NOT TO KILL ANYONE. PUNISH US FOR THE INJURIES WE HAVE CAUSED. WE SATYAGRAHIS ARE NOT AFRAID OF PUNISHMENT.

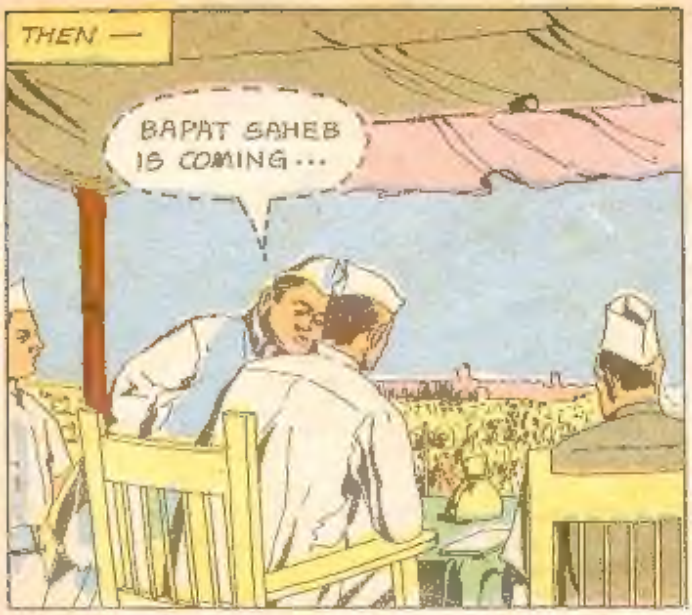
THERE IS A WAR GOING ON BETWEEN THE SATYAGRAHIS AND THE BUILDERS OF THE DAM. THIS IS PART OF THAT WAR.
FOR YOUR VIOLENT ACT, I SENTENCE YOU TO SEVEN YEARS' RIGOROUS IMPRISONMENT.

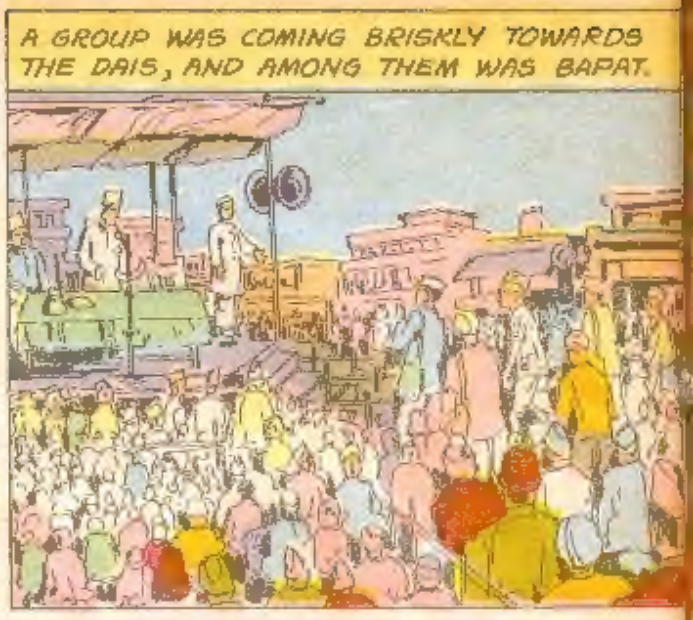
AFTER SEVEN YEARS IN PRISON, BAPAT EMERGED FRAIL AND THIN.
WELCOME BACK, SENAPATI. YOU MUST NOW REST FOR AT LEAST TWELVE MONTHS.
TWELVE MONTHS? TWELVE DAYS, MY FRIEND!


EVEN AFTER COMING OUT OF PRISON, BAPAT WORE CLOTHES SIMILAR TO THAT OF A PRISONER.
AREN'T YOU GOING TO CHANGE YOUR CLOTHES, SENAPATI?
NO, I SHALL CONTINUE TO DRESS LIKE A PRISONER TILL THE COUNTRY IS FREE OF THE FOREIGN YOKE.

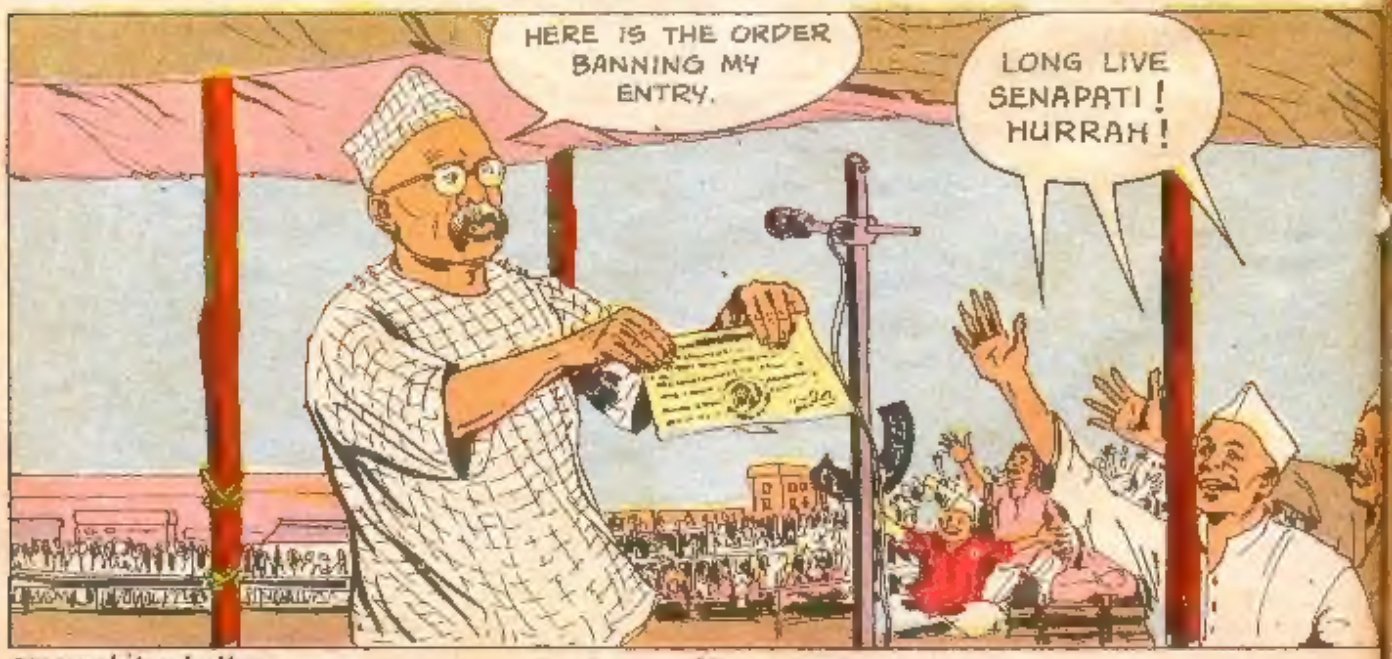

WE HAVE TO CONTINUE OUR STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM. ONLY IN FREE INDIA CAN YOU HOPE TO PUT ON AN ELECTRIC LIGHT IN YOUR HOME, WITHOUT PUTTING OUT THE LIGHTS IN A THOUSAND OTHER HOMES.

NETAJI SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE HAD STARTED HIS FORWARD BLOC PARTY AND AT ITS FIRST PUBLIC MEETING ON THE CHOWPATTY SANDS IN 1940, BAPAT WAS INVITED TO SPEAK. BUT THE DAY BEFORE THIS —
THE HI
Bapat banned from entering Bombay City
HITAVA
THIS IS BAD NEWS AND WE HAVE ALREADY ANNOUNCED IN THE PAPERS THAT SENAPATI WILL BE SPEAKING TOMORROW.
WELL, I AM DETERMINED THAT SENAPATI SHALL SPEAK! HERE IS WHAT WE'LL DO...
THE NEXT EVENING, A HUGE CROWD GATHERED AT CHOWPATTY, WAITING TO HEAR BAPAT. A LARGE POLICE PRESENCE WAS VISIBLE EVERYWHERE.
SUDDENLY —
FRIENDS, AS REPORTED IN THE PAPERS, SENAPATI, DEFYING THE POLICE BAN, WILL DEFINITELY BE WITH US HERE TODAY.
HURRAH! HURRAH!
THE POLICEMEN WERE STARTLED.


THEN —
BAPAT SAHEB IS COMING...


A GROUP WAS COMING BRISKLY TOWARDS THE DAIS, AND AMONG THEM WAS BAPAT.

FRIENDS, I PROMISED TO BE HERE AND I AM HERE.


HERE IS THE ORDER BANNING MY ENTRY.
LONG LIVE SENAPATI! HURRAH!

AND BAPAT BEGAN HIS SPEECH—FULL OF FERVOUR.
AND ONLY THEN DID THE FLABBERGASTED POLICE ACT.
STOP THAT!
HOW DARE YOU ENTER THE CITY!
FOR DEFYING THE BAN, BAPAT WENT TO JAIL FOR A YEAR. EVER GENTLE, NEVER DEJECTED, THERE WAS ALWAYS A SMILE IN HIS EYES AS HE WENT ABOUT HIS JAIL DUTIES.
YOU ARE SO QUIET HERE IN JAIL, SENAPATI. YOU NEVER REBEL OR PROTEST.
OUTSIDE JAIL, I AM A SLAVE OF THE BRITISH—I MUST REBEL AND DEFY THE LAW. BUT WHEN I AM HERE FOR THE SAKE OF MY MOTHERLAND—I MUST BE ON MY BEST BEHAVIOUR.
ON AUGUST 15, 1947, THE STRUGGLE PUT UP BY MILLIONS OF PATRIOTS, BORE FRUIT. INDIA BECAME INDEPENDENT.
IN DELHI, PANDIT JAWAHARLAL NEHRU HOISTED THE NATIONAL FLAG.
IN PUNE, BAPAT WAS GIVEN THAT HONOUR.
AFTER INDEPENDENCE, SENAPATI BAPAT CONTINUED TO TAKE AN ACTIVE PART IN SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ACTIVITIES TILL HIS DEATH ON NOVEMBER 28, 1967. HE WAS 87 WHEN HE DIED.